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## **The Artificial Body:** Speaking Through Stammers and Silences

An examination of some of the observed phenomena in rehearsal processes towards the performance of the damaged and dis-membered bodies that inhabit Caryl Churchill and David Lan's *A Mouthful of Birds* (Methuen 1986) and Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* (Faber & Faber 1989).

There are many ethical questions trailing in the wake of the kinds of approaches discussed here, and I am extremely grateful to those students of University College Chester's Department of Drama and Theatre Studies who have allowed me to quote them and to analyse their work in this paper.

### **Two Anecdotes**

#### **1.The 'Instant' Artificial Body, Art and Articulation**

Whilst in the early stages of planning this paper, I was working alongside Erkki Laakso, a visiting Finnish lecturer, with a group of students, who were in turn working with a group of seven year old children on an adaptation of Janek Szatkowski's '60 second theatre'.

This strictly time and rule-bound strategy for de-/re-constructing the elements of performance allows those designated 'actors' only

minutes to rehearse a line that has been written only minutes before.

One little boy, playing a 'lazy' man, delivered his line with ringing and deliberate force,

*"I'm going to lie down,"*

he declared - and did so with great relish, and to much applause and laughter.

The line is not of itself a lyrical one, and the 30 seconds of theatre the children produced had charm, but no great revelation for us as adult spectators. As far as we were concerned, our experiment had worked - these little children had collaborated in making their own piece of theatre in 45 minutes.

Later, as the children left the hall, the class teacher turned to me and quietly said of the actor who had played the lazy man,

*"That is the first time I have ever heard that child speak without a stammer. He is very bright, but has great difficulty talking and reading out loud."*

The child continues to stammer in everyday life.

As an actor, with rehearsed, already decided and agreed script and

gestures, his act of speaking worked 'normally'. Acting, perhaps, healed his stammer momentarily. In simplistic terms, had this boy somehow displaced his body memory of his everyday stammer with the newly acquired body memory of his role as 'lazy man'? Had one body memory been drawn out and another put in through the act of concentrated rehearsal and performance demanded of him that morning? His voice was not 'his own' on the stage which he had also helped to create - but neither were his gestures and movements. His 'language-body' (Pavis 1990 p.151-156) had been open to development and change. This development and change were seemingly discarded as soon as the artifice of performance was no longer demanded of him.

## **2.The Psychodramatic Body or Whose Skin Am I In?**

Since the 1970s I have maintained a wary relationship with psychodrama. (Something to do with its 'fatherliness' scares me; it has the advantage of being overtly rule-bound, though. It does not *pretend* to be spontaneous but can create the conditions for spontaneity.) Introductory sessions are offered to students who express interest in it as a form.

One particular session with a group who had committed themselves to the process, took the form of a re-enactment of an event that had

occurred when the protagonist had been six.

At the time of the psychodrama session she was nineteen and during the course of it, she played roles OTHER than herself, as psychodrama uses 'doubling' and 'mirroring' in excavating the past. The session ran for almost three hours, as many aspects of this event were explored. At one point towards the end of the time frame, the protagonist was invited to enter into what psychodrama terms "surplus reality". This convention provides the opportunity to say something that the 'real' six year old was not able to say at the time of the original incident. She chose to do so, and after the drama had been closed, reported immensely powerful sensations of re-inhabiting her six year old self. Aware of the very deliberate way that the psychodrama process seeks to dredge up memory, and conscious throughout of those techniques, she was nevertheless overpowered by a sense of her 'everyday body' being radically reinvented into the body of her once six year old self.

*"It is as if I am here and not here at the same time; I have gone through all the ritual de-roling but physically I'm still back with that memory. I'm six, in the kitchen at home, not here in this studio. I know it's going to take a long time to get out of this six year old's skin."*

She did 'get out of' that skin, but calculated that 'getting out', with the

careful support of fellow students, took more than twice the time it took to get into it.

She has continued to be an intense and engaged student (and now, teacher) of drama.

### Connections?

Such events may seem far removed from the stated focus of this paper. It serves, however, to clarify the fact that the particular Images and moments I am attempting to unpack and unravel are to do with the moment of fictional utterance and are also marked by a very literal attention given to 'the power of speech' - or 'entry into the symbolic order.'

Both 'language-body' shifts came about as part of a process of acting **other than** in the real. (Surplus reality in psychodrama serves as wish-fulfilment, it is NOT the re-enactment of an actual event - it is an improvised, created moment. This was the particular moment identified as most strongly bringing about the sense of bodily transformation.)

These anecdotes also reflect the fact that I work as a 'reflective practitioner'<sup>1</sup> in an academic and pedagogical context. Talking and writing about the making of work are thus part of a continuum, part of the 'finished' work itself, as well as part of the 'next task'. Borders between process and

product, between making and analysing are blurred and overlapping.

The paper seeks to examine some approaches to the processes that the speaking actress undergoes when in the course of performance she is either violently denied speech, as in the case of Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale*, or her speech acts are impeded in some equally vivid but possibly less brutal, way, as in the case of Doreen in *A Mouthful of Birds*.

### Context(s)

Both *The Love of the Nightingale* and *A Mouthful of Birds* discourse on the nature of physical and psychological dismemberment, using a re-visited classical myth as a core device. Whilst there is a broader argument, that myths are themselves forms of culturally constructed memories and as such perpetuate an unreconstructed patriarchal framework through which to consider the world, I am still compelled by them, perhaps enslaved by them.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the experience of working on various aspects of the Dionysus myth at Avignon in 1991<sup>3</sup> was instrumental in my choosing to produce *A Mouthful of Birds* the following year. Enrique Pardo's exacting parallel between performer preparation and the myth of the birth of Dionysus has continued to be a

source of praxis and puzzlement ever since.

This paper focuses on how two particular images in the texts could be and have been explored through notions of actual and artificial embodiment. Those images focus on the mouth and may be linked to 'memories of silencing' - one woman has her tongue cut out, another feels she speaks through '*a mouthful of birds*'. Many student performers '*feel*' they understand what this must be like from 'some sort of' memory.

When considering the mouth as a negotiating boundary between what is outside the bodily self (the body-as-self) and what is inside, and thinking of the text as a substance which crosses and re-crosses that boundary, the investigation is located firmly within the parameters of recent feminist literary discourses on the body, text and identity, and within the continuing debate concerning the ownership of performance when the 'source' material is not entirely 'original.'

The result seems, so far, to be a muddle of metaphor - dismissed as a pre-rational form under Cartesian dualism, but re-embraced, with reservations, by Helene Cixous for its ability to dismantle and over-ride the antagonism of the nature/culture polarity. In her essay, 'Metaphorical Thinking and Poetic Writing in Virginia Woolf and Helene Cixous', Francoise Defromont suggests that

Cixous herself sufficiently rationalises her own use of metaphor to demonstrate that the sense of '*an excess*' of '*an overlapping*' is evidence of

*"...the body being a full cultural and symbolic space that is explicitly connected with the feminine. The body is then simultaneously the beloved object to be written about, and the writing subject which supports the rising feminine identity. Access to symbolic order of language - that is, to culture - occurs through the body- that is, nature - thus bringing about a continuity of a new kind, raising both the book and the flesh to their highest pitch."*

(Wilcox, Mcwatters et alia. p.120)

Theory has a habit of becoming all embracing.

The '*sort of memory*' the performers referred to may be claimed as evidence of a memory of Lacanian 'lack'; or a reminder of Irigaray's statements that '*this sex which is not one*' is

*'unrepresentable.....Within a language that rests on univocal signification, the female sex constitutes the unconstrainable and undesignatable.'*

(Butler p.9.)

Memories of childhood oppressions are common-place - such silencings

are not gender specific. But the image of removing the tongue (the clitoris?), immediately after rape renders Philomele a 'proper' woman under the economic system of patriarchy - wounded, silenced and penetrated by a man. She becomes one whose experience ultimately cannot be expressed through embodiment or role (logos), but only through projection, in this case onto dilated puppet figures. A scale-distorted, absolutely artificial body becomes the only effective way of expressing Philomele's experience. She reconstructs her memories in 'other' figures, other identities - that are separate from her 'self', but manipulated and created by her.

In rehearsals for a student-directed performance of this play, the actress playing Philomele found the puppet manipulation deeply disturbing and embarrassing.

*"We were all uncomfortable during those rehearsals - giggled a lot and resisted trying to work on those scenes.....There was no escape into euphemism, no dressing up of the act in lyrical language..."*

And she also viewed the cutting out of the tongue as very 'secondary' to the violence and violation of the rape. The adulteration of Philomele's youthful sexual yearnings, the 'dirtying' of her desire by the rape was the worst act, in her eyes.

*"It's every woman's nightmare, isn't it?"*

*That pollution of your body by something smelly and unwanted.... something brutal.."*

This puppet show is for her sister's eyes mainly, who becomes, at that moment, Barba's 'informed spectator'<sup>4</sup> and who translates the individual experience into the universal one through the line, uttered as she looks into her sister's maimed mouth,

*"Is that what the world looks like?"*  
(p.41)

In Kristeva's terms, both Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale* and Doreen/Agave in *A Mouthful of Birds*, are figures who are returned to the pre-Oedipal, pre-symbolic state by actions or images that impede vocalisation. Their experiences are thus rendered "unintelligible. "

According to Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*, however, their silence draws attention to the woman as a speaking subject by the very fact of the denial of that power of language. As Lynda Hart points out in *Fatal Women* (1994)

*".....to violate borders is to reveal how a system is constructed."*  
(p.98)

The material and physical invasion of Philomele's body reveals the politics of patriarchy all too graphically - and our own responses to the

representation of such acts reveal something of our own location in relation to the systems of cultural encoding we are locked into. Through its deliberately oppositional treatment of gender, (male and female choruses, for example,) Wertenbaker's text foregrounds the sword/phallus of the masculine act against the (s)wordless/language of the dominant female characters, Procne and her younger sister Philomele, both of whom are shown to be agents of exchange between the father and the material world.

The play sketches in what Lynda Hart describes as an

*"... Oedipal family structure where the female body functions as a closed system opened only by the penetration of a man or the birth of a child ..."*  
(ibid. p.97)

or as Judith Butler notes in *Gender Trouble* (1990),

*"In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself - as well as its contingency."* (p.137)

Gender discourse is in the case of *The Love of the Nightingale*, paradoxically then, initially linked thus:

woman = Athens = culture = words

man = Thrace = violent nature = inarticulate action

These codes are subverted, however, when the sisters take their revenge for Philomele's rape by slaughtering Tereus' son with his own sword for transgressing into the 'woman only' space of the Thracian revels. This is no mystic feminist wonderland where *jouissance* and *écriture* feminine run free. Its boundaries are carefully patrolled and controlled by the ruling patriarchy - the maimed Philomele is allowed out into the streets only in the hope that her mutilation will be attributed to Bacchic excess,

*"Could have cut off her tongue in frenzied singing to the gods."* (p.39)

Thus Tereus hoped that responsibility for the act would to be attributed to the self-mutilating practices of 'savage' women.

There are 21 direct references to silencing/silence in the 49 pages of text.

One student who directed a version of the play, felt that

*"...this whole play is about being pushed into silence, as Procne is pushed into exile, into a strange place ... and Tereus destroys himself through the rape. He proves himself incapable of love in the face of an articulate woman."*

*(The Love of the Nightingale* interrogates masculinity and power

in a much fuller way than can be discussed here.)

Churchill and Lan's text, *A Mouthful of Birds*, threads together glimpses of seven different lives through repeated references to *The Bacchae*. The stage direction "*Dionysos dances*" begins and ends the text, and this dancing figure recurs throughout as a structuring device and as a source of (literal) inspiration.

The original 1986 production was devised with a company of actors and dancers, working with Ian Spink as choreographer. In consequence, many of the stage directions are dance orientated.

Seven of the thirty two sections of the text are extracts from *The Bacchae*: - five of them labelled *Possession*, the last two, *The Dressing of Pentheus* and the *Death of Pentheus*. (Notions of masculine and feminine identity are constantly under scrutiny.)

The major pre-occupation we found in working on the text, however, was negotiating the boundaries between pleasure and pain, between terror and ecstasy - and between the 'two' texts themselves. As an example, the first *Possession* scene, scene 10, consists of two stage directions and one spoken line:

*"DIONYSOS appears to DOREEN  
DOREEN is possessed by AGAVE*

*AGAVE. I put my foot against its side and tore out its shoulder. I broke open its ribs."*

This is immediately followed by scene 11 - entitled *Fruit Ballet*.

*"Whole company as their main characters.*

*This dance consists of a series of movements mainly derived from eating fruit. It emphasises the sensuous pleasures of eating fruit and the terrors of being torn up."* (p.28)

The Doreen/Agave split already allows access to debate about the 'ordinary' versus the 'artificial' or mythical body - although both are still fictional constructs that the performer has to find a way of developing.

The final speech in *A Mouthful of Birds* is given to the character of Doreen. She it is who feels that her mouth,

*" ....is full of birds which I crunch between my teeth. Their feathers, their blood and broken bones are choking me. I carry on my work as a secretary."* (p.71)

Despite giving a woman the last words, the play actually closes with the direction,

*"DIONYSOS dances."*

giving the ultimate power to the ambiguously-gendered dancing body of the desirable but destructive figure



to whom theatre was once dedicated - and whose own myths of engenderment depend upon various dis-memberments.

The Dionysos that emerged from rehearsal in a production we attempted in 1992 was a figure composed of energy itself, associated strongly with air and fire as elements. Performers learned to breathe fire, and the *Possession* scenes used breath and the literal exchange of breath as a motif for trance-formation brought about by the presence of Dionysus. The role was split between two performers, one female, one male, who marked out the boundaries of the playing area in their opening and closing dances. This space was to be open to both genders, and was made simultaneously dangerous and desirable by the Dionysian figure.

Pleasure and terror co-exist in this figure and, as previously stated, those notions were central to much of the rehearsal process, although the Doreen/Agave character seemed much more afflicted by pain and terror than others in the text. Those birds she crunches come from within - the performer playing the role was

*"....sure they fly around inside her and try to get out through every orifice. They are part of the pain she feels, and part of her power."*

This image of what could be termed 'mangled magic', of a woman failing to smoothly produce a hidden dove

from within herself, struck me very forcibly. Initially, I had imagined these birds trying to get *into* her mouth - but came to see them as visions that took on bodily form and were damaged in the attempt to transmit them to the outside world. They cannot take flight as ideas or as any shaped artistic form until Doreen learns how to 'unblock' herself? She is a figure constantly seeking release through action.

Doreen shared the Dionysian sense of essentialist energy, indicated by her frequent running, her restlessness, her experiences of self-mutilation, and her involvement in kinetic transference in the latter scenes. This proved a source of positive delight to the actress, whose 'everyday' body grew physically fitter as a result of a punishing physical rehearsal process.

This text, for all its darkness and disturbance, led to rehearsals that were full of *jouissance* and it forced us to 'write from the body' (Cixous' phrase) in making the performance. At least half of early rehearsals took place in silence by agreement, until we decided to use some African music as a motif for the **Fruit Ballet** and until we absolutely had to

begin speaking text. A ritual of a 'group run' was established, taking its basic form from Nicholas Nunez' shamanistic workshops.<sup>5</sup> The phrase '*Esprit de corps*', with its literal and metaphorical references to the

breath, inspiration and the body singular and plural, took on new meaning as performance preparation itself involved pain and pleasure operating together - and drew on two techniques (Pardo's and Nunez's) that acknowledged the body as both site and source of mystic/visionary practices.

The closing scene in Wertenbaker's text, by contrast, returns Philomele to the 'symbolic'. Wertenbaker adheres to the version of the myth that transforms Philomele into a nightingale, and Procne into a swallow. She also resurrects the murdered child, Itys, who is required to subject Philomele to questioning before she will sing again. It is he who gets the last word in the form of an unanswered question.

*PHILOMELE: Do you understand why it was wrong of Tereus to cut out my tongue?*

*ITYS: It hurt.*

*PHILOMELE: Yes, but why was it wrong?*

*ITYS: (bored) I don't know. Why was it wrong?*

*PHILOMELE: It was wrong because -*

*ITYS: What does wrong mean?*

*PHILOMELE: It is what isn't right.*

*ITYS: What is right?*

*(The Nightingale sings)*

*ITYS: Didn't you want me to ask questions?*

*(Fade)*

Or perhaps what really closes the play is Philomele's silence - this time as an elective mute - or singing in a voice which is not 'her own', not her 'original' one.

This reading, however, forces us back to notions of the inexpressibility of her experience. When, therefore, Irigaray suggests that women involved in rape should not be categorically presented as prosecutors (since that position makes relationships between men and women even more difficult) but that '*society should be the plaintiff*' - she still leaves unresolved the problem of how to legitimate such experiences through a mode of discourse that presents '*masculine cultural values*' as neutral. Philomele has learned the Athenian way of question and answer, but it cannot give voice to the truth of her own experience of her own body. The performer playing Philomele in another production, dreamed of having her mouth filled with stones during the rehearsal period. It was vital for her to have her mouth positioned at the lowest point in relation to the rest of her body. Her impulse was "*to fill the hurt mouth with earth*" after the mutilation. This seemed to be both comfort and burial. In the actual performance, therefore, the fact that Tereus' unholy kiss on the wounded mouth is what first fills the gap became doubly horrible as violation and occupation. His own impotence is forced upon

her. Only once she is entirely 'castrated' (no longer able to question?) does he feel safe to approach her. His kiss seeks to take from her the remnants of the 'cultured' world she represents and/or to taste the blood of her wounding. (Menstruation brought under male control?)

In some practical explorations of this moment in the text, as director I wanted this kiss to be seen as a deeply penetrative act. (Echoes of Doubting Thomas checking out the validity of the site of the wound? Checking out the vacancy - the 'not-thereness' that he desires? The role of the feminist spectator is impossible when what we are constantly asked to bear witness to is the mutilation of our sex, as Cixous has pointed out. But there is a moment here when the literal embodiment of, how else to put it, his tongue in her tongueless mouth, says it all: or rather, silences all it cannot itself comprehend nor wishes to hear expressed.

That kiss is an act of absolute possession.

*"You are mine. My sweet, my songless, my caged bird." (p.37)*

Philomele is, however, *beyond* the confines of his cage rather than safely within them. She is excluded from the ordered realm her voice had threatened, rather than imprisoned within it.

The student director (a young man), however, chose to make the kiss a soft, tender and fleeting one - chaste, almost. The actor playing Tereus understood the lines in terms of only now daring to be tender. *"He feels he can risk some softness now she is completely robbed of what he saw as her superiority."*

Rubber-doll syndrome, we called it.

*"She can't say anything to alter his fantasy of her now. He can project all his stuff onto her."*

The 'doll' discourse had been very much part of earlier experiments with embodiment, projection and role exercises we had used in pre-text sessions, and had given rise to heated debate about the status of puppets as a theatrical form.

The actress playing Philomele wished to stress that the objects she used were puppets and **not** dolls. She wanted them to be the creations of an adult woman seeking expression, not a child merely 'acting out' the events.

Gender discourse seems less polarised, comparatively complex and fluid in *'A Mouthful of Birds'* where power is as ambiguous and shifting as identity itself. The world created in *The Love of the Nightingale* is rigidly, albeit, ironically, established as patriarchal and Oedipal. The elder of the two sisters is exchanged as payment for an alliance in a recent war.

It is the roles of Philomele and Doreen that this paper intended to isolate and discuss in some detail in relation to whether rehearsal processes **put memory into** or **draw it from** the performing body and whether we can attempt to define the boundaries between these ostensibly simple differences.

The argument so far has failed to do that but has, perhaps, cleared some more ground for the next work.

Body memory seems to be more than metaphor, but metaphor seems to capture some sense of how it might operate. In both cases, links between the everyday map of memory and the artificial blueprint of the roles, were made through talk, through other texts and through the actors' own private preparations and reflections. Performers were encouraged to keep a private notebook, and try to use it whenever/wherever useful. (By the bed is a good place for active dreamers.)

Do memories of dreams count as actual memories? The content of such notebooks often remained utterly private - this is what drove the inner energies of the performances.

In working on *A Mouthful of Birds* the whole company had been through an adaptation of Pardo's dis-membering/re-membering text exercises and as I have said, through a series of trance inducing exercises

to have a taste of some notions of possession. What emerged from these was a distinction between the role of Lena, who hears voices from outside urging her to violence and Doreen's sense of her physical body being the site of occupation by strange and painful forces.

*'I don't know which bit of me it's in ... It's not so much that I'm going to vomit, but every bit of me is nauseated, my left foot wants to vomit, my blood - I'm completely full of this awful sickness'* (p.58)

Doreen was driven not by words, but by embodied sensations - and the words of this speech are delivered whilst another woman massages and attempts to ease Doreen's physical pain.

The performer who played Doreen/Agave, like most of the company, had had no previous experience of dance or movement-based performance. She looked physically powerful, was in fact quite emotionally fragile, but was willing to work to extreme limits throughout the process. She created theatre through a brave and tireless process of dis-creation of self.

There was a definite streak of the sado-masochistic in the processes used to produce *A Mouthful of Birds*. I deliberately sought ways of 'breaking the breath', of bringing the actors to a state of near exhaustion before 'allowing' them to adopt the authority

of the text. I looked for ways of making the delivery of words broken, fractured, damaged in some way by physical tiredness, or semi-trance induced by drumming or repeated movement.

Pre-text exercises on the nature of memory using embodiment, projection and role as three stages of attempting to bring distant or hidden or created(?) memories into being through different types of re-enactment were the main pattern adopted in investigating the role of Philomele. These were less obviously cruel, but did entail some interrogation of conscious mouth-based memories. These included relationships with 'forbidden fruit' in the form of re-enacting memories of 'stealing' some sort of food - and recalling moments of unwanted or desired intrusion into the mouth. Such memories ranged from the horrors of school dentists who inserted nicotine flavoured digits into the mouth (recalled with much pleasurable disgust), to pleasurable reminiscences connected with comfort blankets (recalled with much attention to horrid detail regarding stiffening saliva stains in contrast to the smooth satin textures of the original item).

These exercises were intended to find links that might carry the performer across the boundaries between the everyday and the performing body mediated by the text itself.

Other sessions, however, deliberately dis-membered the text by selecting images that were to be instantaneously embodied through movement. These 'surface images' would then form the basis of development of choreography without much verbal dismantling or analysis. The imagery of birds that somehow connects Doreen/Agave with Philomele echoes this inside-out/outside-in patterning. Doreen carries the birds within her. Philomele has the Nightingale outside - it is wrapped around her 'old' self. Doreen senses several others within, struggling to emerge. Philomele becomes THE (definitive) nightingale.

Identity discourse reverts to metaphor in both cases - but the interiority of one set against the externality of the other leaves this paper straddling yet another bundle of boundaries, with only the shadow of the Shaman's wings to suggest directions.

The next practical project I am to engage in is a performance-based exploration of a woman's 'real' experience of dissociation identity disorder, a condition of being which is considered 'not to exist' by many psychologists.

"Discourse is not life" Foucault has said - but sometimes the edges are blurred.

## FOOTNOTES

1 Taken from David Sweet's discussion paper *'The Reflective Practitioner in Context'* 1995. Manchester Metropolitan University Department of Fine Art.

2 This may be viewed as a form of theatrical necrophilia - a desire to breath life into long-dead narratives. There is certainly some sense of the dog that worries at old bones in this obsession, tossing the most important fragments aside in pursuit of some unknown but desired satisfaction?

3 Pantheatre's Third Biennial Myth and Theatre Week at Villeneuve-lez-Avignon 19-24 August 1991. Pardo uses the version of Semele (Agave's sister) being impregnated by Zeus and losing her life as a result of Hera's jealousy and cunning. Tempted into wishing to see Zeus 'as he really is', Semele is struck dead by lightning but Zeus rescues the foetal Dionysus, sews him up in his thigh and gives birth to him in secret. When Hera discovers this, she sets the Titans in pursuit of the baby Dionysus. Playfulness (animal spirits?) and cunning (teknos/technique) are both needed to win the infant over. This part of the myth is the one Pardo uses to begin exploring the relationships between movement and speaking. By a process of dis-membering a movement sequence established from the 'tempting scene', he suggests the performer can work towards a dis-membering/re-membering process that could serve as a way of making new work and/or

performing existing texts. This process is simultaneously physical and metaphorical.

4 The last of Barba's 'Four Spectators' in Barba, E & Savarese, N. *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*. London: Routledge, 1991.

5 Another rule-bound system based on Nunez' experiences with some American Indian practices, which I encountered at the Centre for Performance Research, Cardiff, January 1993 as part of a conference entitled Performance, Ritual and Shamanism.

## Productions referred to

*A Mouthful of Birds* at The Royal Court Theatre 1986 and version performed by second year undergraduates at University College Chester directed by Kate Smith, 1992.

*The Love of the Nightingale* directed as a research piece by Martin Shaw at University College Chester 1994 with Jane Philpott as Philomele.

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First presented at the 'Body Memory in Performance' Conference, Lancaster University, August 1995.

For Wanda, who gave more than I knew at the time, and knew more than I gave.

**Kate Smith**, July 1995/6.